


Approved for Release
Deborah A. Jefferson

Director for Human Resources
Management

11/29/05
Date

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) BULLETIN # 018, FY06, 5 CFR 339.306-0021

SUBJECT: Workers' Compensation Return To Work Initiative

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon release of the HR Bulletin

EXPIRATION DATE: November 1, 2007

SUPERSEDES: N/A

BACKGROUND: In FY 2004 the Department spent more than \$14 million in workers' compensation and medical costs for employees hurt on the job. A comprehensive return-to-work policy will generate long-term savings by removing injured employees from long-term disability rolls and increase their self-esteem and self-worth by getting them back to work.

PURPOSE: This HR Bulletin outlines the Department's return-to-work policy.

PROCEDURES: Upon receipt of medical documentation that indicates an injured worker may be able to return to the workplace either full time or in a light duty assignment, the Director of the Office of Occupational Safety and Health will establish an employee assignment team. The team will include a representative from the employee's HR servicing office, their first-line supervisor, and a bureau/office senior management official. The employee assignment team will review the employee's workers' compensation claim file and physician's medical recommendations to formulate a return-to-work plan. If feasible, the review team will make a return-to-work recommendation to the bureau/office's appointing authority. This recommendation will include a proposed job assignment and any associated medical accommodations required.

The bureau/office appointing authority will accept or reject the return-to-work recommendation and return his/her decision in writing to the Director of the Office of Occupational Safety and Health.

If a return-to-work plan is rejected by the appointing authority, the Director of the Office of Occupational Safety and Health will notify in writing the Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Secretary for Administration (CFO/ASA) of the appointing authority's decision to not return the employee to work.

REFERENCES: Federal Employee Compensation Act (FECA) (5 U.S.C. 8101 et seq.) is administered by the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) of the U.S. Department of Labor, DAO 202-810, Workers' Compensation For Federal Employees dated November 24, 2005. (5 CFR 339.306-0021).

OFFICE OF OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH: Fred Fanning, Director, ffanning@doc.gov, 202-482-0211

PROGRAM MANAGER CONTACT INFORMATION: Kathy Mattingly, kmattingly@doc.gov, (202) 482-0689 or Adrienne Ross, aross@doc.gov, 202-482-4943